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BIOGRAPHY.

EXTRACTS FROM MR. ABBOT'S DIARY.

(Continued from p. 335.)

No. IV.

His Sabbath Frames.

1729, Jan. 5, *Lord's Day.* **O**F a good frame of soul in God's house ; in some good measure free from wanderings ; diligent in attendance upon the word of God, and hearty in my devotions. The Lord forgive the sins of my best duties, and accept of praise for assistance afforded to me ; and give me grace to spend every Sabbath I may enjoy this year, [it being the first Sabbath in a new year] as well and better than I have this ; and enable me to carry the good impression of one Sabbath to another, by lively devotions and affections, that I may continually be disposed to serve and glorify him.

1730, May 17, *Sabbath.*] In secret and in private, in the morning and at noon, something of life ; but too dull, and careless, and drowsy, in public, and in secret at noon. Too much formality, hypocrisy, and spiritual pride, in my best duties. I have not been lively, and fixed, and fervent in the duties of this day, as I should have been. Though I hope the day was not a weariness to me, but I was a burden to myself, that I did not serve God any better. But I hope I was sincere. The good Lord
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pardon me, as thou dost every one that sets his heart aright to seek thee.

June 7, Sabbath.] I had some pleasant thoughts of the Lord's day before it came, and I was glad when it arrived; and of a serious frame as soon as awake, and when up; and I think hearty and earnest in secret in the morning, and in private. Pretty full of holy ejaculations as I went to and came from the house of God. I did (I hope I can truly say) meet with God. And I was, I hope, truly desirous, before this day came, to have the enjoyments of it blessed to me, for saving good to my soul. And also when waiting upon God in the duties of it, I hope it was my hearty desire, and earnest prayer to the glorious God, that if I am to this day dead in trespasses and sins, I might be this day quickened to live to God; that it might be the day of his power, and the time of his love to my soul. And if I am already converted and renewed, I might now be sanctified more than ever: that I might receive abundant strength against all sin,—have all grace strengthened in me; be quickened to the performance of every duty; and especially that I might be lively, fixed, and sincere in secret duties; and so live the hidden life of a Christian. And I had some good impressions left on my mind at the close of the day.

July 12, Lord's-Day.] I hope under the gracious influences of the blessed Spirit, and assisted by him in the discharge of the duties of the day. I was in some good measure free from wandering and vain thoughts, and desired to suppress them in their first motions, and to cherish good ejaculations; and I was assisted in so doing, and in some good measure succeeded. I was hearty, lively, and earnest in most of my private duties, and of a good frame at God's house: desiring to receive the truth in the love of it, and to mix it with faith; to treasure it up in my heart, and practise it in my life. And I hope it was my hearty desire and earnest prayer this day, that I might feel the word of God quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing asunder between sin and my soul.

Sept. 6, Sabbath.] I had much comfort in waiting on God this day. In the afternoon the text preached from was, Prov. iii. 17. *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* And can I not say this is true from my own experience, in the pleasure and comfort I have often found when serving the Lord? O that I might forever detest, loath and abhor the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season!

Lord's-Day, July 4, 1731.] I have been serious and composed, and have enjoyed sweet communion with the glorious God this day. Much in ejaculatory petitions.—And at the public worship in prayer fixed; saying in my heart, at almost every

every confession, *Lord, I own it*; at every petition, *Lord, I ask it*; at every thanksgiving, *Lord, I thank thee*---*Lord, I bless thee*---*Lord, I praise thee*.—Diligent in hearing the word preached. O Lord, grant that I may always enjoy such sweet Sabbaths, and let the good impressions that have been and shall be made on my soul by them, mightily influence and govern me in the whole of the remainder of my life. Lord, hear me for my dear Saviour's sake!

(To be continued.)

For the MASSACHUSETTS M. MAGAZINE.

REFLECTIONS ON MAT. xxvii. 5,
DISPLAYING THE PROGRESS AND DANGER OF SIN,
FROM THE APOSTACY OF JUDAS.

And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

THE whole progress of sin is full of deception. Her smiles, like those of the harlot, are designed to seduce and allure the heedless wretch. To him her ways seem the ways of pleasantness, and all her paths, peace. Her infatuated votary pictures to himself much pleasure and emolument in walking in her paths. These appear strowed with flowers, and decorated with the choicest fruits. But the unwary traveller finds these inviting paths planted with thorns: her pleasant fruits are found to be of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah; her grapes are grapes of gall; her clusters are bitter; her wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.

“Sin has a thousand treach’rous arts
To practise on the mind,
With flatt’ring looks she tempts our hearts,
But leaves a sting behind.”

Such are the arts of sin; all that is awful in her train, she labours artfully to conceal, until her deluded pursuer finds himself on the confines of despair. *He goeth after her straightway as the ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.*

Such, truly, was the latter end of that unhappy man, who
opened

opened a way for himself to the last abode of sin and despair, with his own hand. Ah, Judas ! Is this the miserable end of a life spent in the family of Christ ? under his instructions ? Is it the end of a professor—of an Apostle of the Lamb ? Didst thou seek a refuge in the silence of the grave, from the reproaches of men ; from the pangs of a guilty conscience ; from the frowns of an angry God ? O sin ! how great are thy delusions ! Thou persuadest the sinner to adopt *thee* for his guide ; thou leadest him blindfold through all thy devious paths, directly into that way which leads down to death ; which takes hold on hell. Then to extricate himself, thou persuadest him, by his own act to plunge himself headlong into the devouring pit. Such are thine arts and such the miserable end of thy deluded followers. “ Sin has a thousand treacherous arts.” In different paths does she lead her followers ; *but all the downward road.* As different passions and propensities predominate in different men ; so various are the objects which she holds out to fascinate and destroy. Is a man ambitious ? She shows him the kingdoms of the world with all their glory, to inflame his heart with the unhallowed love of dominion. To obtain this splendid nothing, he will wade through the blood of millions. Is a man fond of forbidden pleasures ? In the *one* hand sin holds out the intoxicating cup, and the man is soon lost in the brute : With the *other*, she invites him to leave his father’s house and spend his living among harlots. He gathers all together, determined to see and enjoy the world, and takes his journey into a far country, and there spends his substance in riotous living. *But his poverty is coming like one that travels, and his wants like an armed man.* When his heart and his veins are consumed within him, he is heard to lament and say, *how have I hated instruction and my soul despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me. I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.* Is a man fordid and avaricious ? Is he ready to say unto gold, *thou art my hope, and unto silver, thou art my confidence ?* Then she blinds him to every principle of justice, benevolence and humanity by their glittering charms. Fascinated with these, he has no eye to pity, no hand to relieve the poor and destitute, his ears become deaf to the cry of the widow and the fatherless ; worse still ! the sacred bonds of friendship are violated, treachery creeps into his heart ; and with smiles upon his face, and a kiss upon his lips, he betrays his friend ! My God, what is man ! will he for a few pieces of silver sell his friend, his master and his God !

This, O Judas, was the devil which entered thine heart. This monster was cherished in thy bosom : and by its insatiable cravings, thou wast moved to betray innocent blood. Unhappy man ! in the last moments of despair thou didst acknowledge

knowledge this ; *I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood.* My hypocrisy and avarice have now their consummation. The deed is done—my guilt is full. The love of money, which I have coveted, to me has been the root of all this evil ; in pursuit of this, I have erred from the way of righteousness, and pierced myself through with many sorrows. I knew the influence of gold over a mercenary heart. I knew it had extinguished in the bosom of Jacob's sons, every sentiment of tenderness, humanity and fraternal affection towards their amiable brother. *When they saw the anguish of his soul,* they had no pity : but even they did not sell him to men determined on his life. I knew what the gold of Midian had done even to a prophet. Intoxicated with the prospect of honour and wealth, he presumptuously violated the prohibition of Heaven, and with the high character of a prophet perished miserably with the enemies of God. And will not every generation heap their maledictions on my infamous name, which will be perpetuated only to be abhorred. My name will stand upon the pages of inspiration, like some decayed monument on a barren tempestuous shore, to proclaim danger and direct others in the haven of safety and rest. I can say with the first murderer, *my punishment is greater than I can bear.* I have nothing to expect from heaven and earth but frowns and curses. Oh ! could I banish myself to some distant solitary corner of the universe, where no human eye could behold me ! Oh ! could I lie buried in some dark cavern of the earth, and sleep in everlasting forgetfulness, having my existence and name blotted from the remembrance of God and man !

Can I wonder that the face of heaven is covered with frowns ? must not every creature then behold me with astonishment and horror ? Every storm and tempest will appear like a minister of vengeance, sent forth to discharge its fiery bolts on this devoted head. Oh ! why shines the sun on a wretch who is sick of his light, and would gladly exchange it for the gloom and silence of the grave. Can I support such a miserable existence as this ? My master told his disciples that it would be good for his betrayer *had he never been born.* Does this ensure the continuation of despair beyond death ? If there be danger of being *worse destroyed in hell,* may I know it.

O death, open your dark, dismal gate, and let me know the awful secret. May I not hope a refuge in your incumbent shades ? May I not view you as the last friend of the hopeless, despairing wretch ? Can you hide a sinner in thick darkness from the eye of God ? Will your cold hand extinguish that hell which guilt has kindled up in this bosom ? Or art thou the officer who castest the sinner into prison ? Many less guilty, less miserable have fled into your embrace. Were they mistaken,

or

or did they find in you a refuge from every wo? A royal sinner who sat on the throne of Israel sought a refuge in death, by his own sword, from the reproach of a military defeat on the mountains of Gilboa: and a distinguished counsellor under his successor, mortified by neglect, fled into the shades of death, in that very manner in which I am determined to end my ignominious life. I have read the end of the wicked, but now feel his hopeless despairing end. Truly the heavens seem to reveal my iniquity, and the earth to rise up against me.

The history of Judas as a man, as a professor; his treacherous life and tragical death have a language which must reach the heart of every man who will hear. His awful end was the consequence of indulging a selfish, avaricious heart. Such an heart frequently discovered itself in the course of his apostleship. Hence we may infer,

1. The extreme danger of sinful indulgence. The progress of sin is always from bad to worse. When the man commences a sinful course, he may be master of himself: but by every compliance he surrenders a portion of his self-command, until the whole is given up; and he becomes a servant of corruption. Every sinful repetition diminishes the horror of the crime; until the man can with coolness and deliberation do an act at which he once would have shuddered. Sacred history presents us a man shrinking with horror from a prophetic display of his own character, from an anticipated view of his future conduct. *What, is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?* He viewed the action then through the calm medium of reason, humanity and conscience, and justly reprobated what passion and opportunity afterwards prompted him to act without pity or remorse. The progress of sin is like that of certain diseases, whose first symptoms give no alarm, and are therefore treated with neglect, but through that very neglect, they silently fix upon some of the nobler parts, and prey unseen and unobserved upon the organs of life, and the man finds himself dying before he apprehended any danger. When the warnings of conscience, that moral centinel in the human bosom, are disregarded, and her authority suppressed by repeated violations, she at last slumbers in quietness over her guilty charge, undisturbed by crimes whose cry reaches unto heaven. Sin hardens the heart, and when long persevered in, seems to stifle every whisper of conscience, and suppress every presage of future judgment. There are times, however, when this injured, violated and suppressed monitor will speak and will be heard. She has been known to visit a sick bed; and in the near prospect of judgment to ask painful questions; pointing to crimes long forgotten and suggesting dreadful anticipations from the dark abyss before him. But she awakes, not as the gentle guide

guide and preceptress of life, but to wring the bosom where she has been stifled, and to become that never dying worm which will prey upon the guilty hopeless sinner. To this dreadful state sin conducts her followers. But how? From the first sinful indulgence, the sinner passes to a second, to a third and fourth act. And every act strengthens his propensity, and the habit is formed. Conscience remonstrates at the first, but her voice becomes feeble and languid; her reproofs become less pungent, and she drops the reins of government; inclination takes her seat in the sinner's bosom, and *he walks in the way of his own heart, and in the sight of his own eyes.* The nature of sin is to multiply and extend itself: like a river, small at the fountain, the farther it rolls the broader and deeper it becomes; the stream which was easily checked or diverted at its source, by frequent accessions, becomes an headlong torrent, and prostrates every barrier before it. Ask those who have shipwrecked in the voyage of life, the cause of their misfortune and crime; and will they not generally ascribe their ruin to some early vicious indulgence. Destitute of sobriety, unguarded by reflection, they pushed forward after forbidden objects, until lost beyond recovery. If life be a race, the smallest deviation at the commencement will carry us wide from the goal.

This reasoning is substantiated by the experience of every vicious character. Such a character is not the creature of a day, but the effect of frequent violations of conscience and duty, through a length of time. Let the intemperate man relate by what fatal steps he has descended from reason and humanity to a grade below the brute. Like the consumptive man, when interrogated by his physician, he can fix on no particular period when the disease commenced; he can retrace its progress to some slight indisposition which gave him no uneasiness, and excited no attention; but through this neglect the disease has gradually and almost imperceptibly increased, until it end in death. So the man, from a few occasional draughts, goes forward to multiply and enlarge them, regardless of his danger, until his health, reputation, property and soul are drowned in the same cup. In the same manner, the profane man, from the use of some vulgar, heedless expressions, passes on from one degree of profanity to another, until his mouth is filled with cursing and bitterness. The avaricious, dishonest man is formed by a similar process; from being unjust in small things, he passes on to greater, until he becomes familiar with the most flagrant acts of injustice and oppression. How does the thief fortify his bosom against the attacks of conscience and his face from the inroads of shame? Habit does it. He pilfers some trifle in his youth; he goes on to more valuable objects; con-

science

science and shame gradually expire, and he makes his way through locks and bars to his neighbour's property. From the timid pilfering youth, he becomes by practice, the bold, desperate midnight robber and assassin. Follow this son of violence and murder to the place of execution, and listen to his last and dying speech. The history of his life is only a display of the progress of sin. He mourns at the last, and says, In my childhood I was contentious and quarrelsome, unrestrained by parental authority; in youth headstrong and ungovernable in my passions, thievish in my disposition, intemperate, a companion of sinners. These evil propensities, by indulgence, have brought forth violent acts of sin, and sin when finished brings forth death. Let youth then, in particular, beware of indulging in any sin. Judas was unfaithful in that which is least, before he was unfaithful in much.

Our second remark on the history of Judas is, that suicide is sometimes the consequence of a wicked life. That it often has been the effect of mental derangement is undoubtedly true. But suicide, in numerous instances, is not owing to insanity, but to the combined operation, and criminal influence of infidelity and vice, connected with the base passions of a wicked heart. History and observation present men possessing every feature of a sound mind, perpetrating the awful act of self-destruction. Sacred history records several wicked men who, with cool deliberation, terminated their lives by their own hands. When this unnatural act is committed in the exercise of a sound mind, it may be accounted for, in one of these two ways. 1. From the pressure of some present, or anticipated calamity acting upon a sceptical mind: disbelieving a future existence, and feeling the present insupportable to a proud, aspiring heart, he seeks a shelter from the impending blow in the everlasting slumbers of the philosophic infidel. Saul and Ahithophel evidently acted upon this principle: and modern times, and modern philosophy have produced hecatombs of such victims. The increase of suicide on principles of philosophical infidelity is alarming to society. But it is the natural, legitimate offspring of infidelity. Detach all responsibility from human actions—annihilate the tribunal of God, and erase from the mind and heart of man the anticipation of a future state; and let him be disappointed in his worldly expectations, and what principle remains which will hold back his hand from the dreadful act? Upon his principles, there is no God in heaven to call to him, as he did to Abraham, to drop the murderous blade; and the centinel in his bosom has sickened and died by the poisonous draughts of infidelity. The 2d. cause of criminal suicide is the horrors of a guilty and awakened conscience. How high these horrors may rise, perhaps no sinner in this world has completely experienced.

In

In some instances, they have been so insupportable, that the miserable wretch has chosen strangling and death, rather than life. These terrors laid hold on Judas, in such degrees, that the pangs of death seemed a refuge. These are the causes of deliberate suicide. A wicked life, an atheistical head, either separately or conjointly, have produced this dreadful effect.

3. The history of Judas teaches that a quiet course of sin sometimes ends in extreme anguish and deep despair. No sinner can assure himself of quietness until he reaches his grave. Conscience often wakes up in the bosom where she has long securely slept, and with all the fierceness of the enraged lion, she rends the heart. Crimes which passed unnoticed, she now sets in order before him, and he is constrained to view them as high provocations against God: and the former smiles of sin now appear like the fascinations of the serpent before he bites and devours his prey. Many wicked men, who have spent their days in removing from their minds all the truths of religion, and the fears of a future judgment; and in fortifying their hearts against the terrors of a guilty conscience, by a system of philosophical infidelity, have at last been driven to seek a shelter from this enraged foe in the cold embraces of death. Conscience has sometimes assaulted the strong holds of infidelity, and in a moment dissipated those materials which the unbeliever had been years in collecting; and from his falling system, she has dragged him, and held him over everlasting burnings. The most distinguished infidel of modern times,* who had spent a life of eighty four years in proving that death was an everlasting sleep, and a future judgment the dream of superstition, and conscience the guide and terror only of fools; yet the sick and dying chamber of this learned infidel became such a scene of horror and surprise as to be insupportable by the spectators. All his learned labours were swept away, like the spider's web, by the energy of conscience. The sinner knows not the power of that agent he carries in his bosom. The little apprehension wicked men have, while living in a quiet course of sin, that they shall feel these terrors in the close of life, is no security against them. A proud, haughty sinner, who sat on the throne of Babylon, felt himself secure from the reproofs and corrections, probably, of God and man, for his intemperance and sensuality; yet there was *one* who dared to reprove an eastern monarch. Conscience comes, not like a courtier to flatter, but to set his crimes and destiny before him. *His thoughts troubled him, and the joints of his loins were loosened, and his knees smote one against the other.* Even a Roman, and a Roman governor, hardened by a course of injustice and adultery, trembled at the voice of a poor Christian prisoner at his bar. Paul preached, and conscience said, *thou art the man*, and pointed him to the enlightened tribunal of a spotless Judge.

Remember,

Remember, O transgressor, by every sin, you are *treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath*. You are arming against you the foe now sleeping in your bosom. You are preparing for her, stings which will pierce you to the heart. Sometimes the thunder seems to sleep in the angry cloud, but is only preparing to burst with greater fierceness and destruction on the devoted object. So with Judas, and so with many others.

4. The history of Judas, in particular the closing scene of his miserable life, leads us to remark, that there is a foundation laid by the Creator in the human breast for the unspeakable misery of the wicked. He has planted in every bosom a watchful centinel, who is a witness to the most secret and retired actions. She accuses or excuses, when no human eye beholds us. Her record will be inspected and approved by the Supreme Judge. This record, conscience sometimes reads in this life, in the sinner's ear, and like Felix, he trembles at her reproofs. And O how sweet and consolatory is her approbation! *This is our rejoicing*, said a good man, *even the testimony of our conscience*. *Great peace have they who love thy law*: and this peace will be perpetuated forever in the bosom of the just, by the approbation of conscience and the smiles of her God. So on the other hand, there is lodged in the sinner's breast, an agent whose power he knows not, and probably may never know in this world. But we know that she is able to convulse his bosom with agony when her Lord shall permit.

The wicked man need not inquire, where is the place of hell? Where is the region of everlasting burnings? and with what materials are her dreadful flames perpetuated? Whenever God shall please, O sinner! your own bosom will become hell. And a hell infinitely dreadful.

AGATHOS.

THE
JUDGMENTS OF GOD
ON A WICKED WORLD.

Extracted from a European Publication, in but few hands.

A Historical Account of all the Plagues, Pestilences and Famines, which have happened throughout the World from the beginning.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 385.)

A. D. 222. **A** GREAT pestilence in Scotland destroyed above one hundred thousand people.

A. D.

A. D. 228. By a grievous famine there, those that escaped were starved to death.

A. D. 238. Such a dreadful famine prevailed again in Scotland, that the people killed their own children for food.

A. D. 256. When Gallus and Volusian his son were emperors, a dreadful pestilence began in Ethiopia, which infected all kingdoms in the world in such an unheard of manner, that no house, no city, no province escaped the smart of its fury; therefore it is impossible to calculate the number of the dead: however it put a stop to all commerce, conversation and use of letters among men. Baronius says, it continued from the year 255 to 265, i. e. ten years, but others affirm fifteen years. Nay, the reign of these emperors was only remarkable for the great and continued plagues without intermission; and they were very much beloved on this account; because they took care of every one's, even the poorest man's funeral.

A. D. 259. A great famine and pestilence raged in Wales.

A. D. 263. In the ninth of Gallienus emperor, that dreadful pestilence broke out again with the usual fury; so that in Rome and in several cities of Achaia no less than five thousand died of the same disease in one day. And under Flavius Claudius the emperor, after he defeated the armies of the Goths, two hundred thousand died of it at Sirmium in Pannonia, and many thousands besides.

A. D. 266. A plague devoured so many souls in Scotland, that the living were scarce sufficient to bury the dead.

A. D. 272. Such a famine and pestilence prevailed in Britain, that the people were forced to make bread of the barks of trees, turnips, &c.

A. D. 288. Another plague raged in Britain, Wales and Scotland with much fury, and cut off many thousands.

A. D. 306. A grievous famine and pestilence raged in Scotland, and continued four-years together.

A. D. 311. When Maximinus emperor began the sixth general persecution, a dreadful famine began in his army at the siege of Aquileia, which was so great, that one measure of wheat cost 2400 Attic Drachmas, i. e. 85l. 18s. 9d. English Money; besides, many thousands dropped down dead in the streets, and in the fields; some ate the grass and poisonous herbs, whereby they died in very great misery: The dead lying unburied for many days, and being devoured by the dogs, &c. so great a pestilence ensued, that 5000 died in a day. But the Christians by their singular acts of charity saved many from starving; which turned the hearts of the heathens to the true faith, and to love those whom they had persecuted before. And this put a stop to that cruel persecution; so God brings good out of evil.

A. D.

- A. D. 333. A great plague broke out in Scotland : And in
 A. D. 338. Above 40000 were starved to death in Britain and Wales.
- A. D. 375. A plague swept away 43000 people in Wales.
 A. D. 376. Under Valens the Emperor, a famine and pestilence raged violently in many parts of the Roman empire. It was occasioned by the bloody wars, devastations and massacres by the Goths, who then wasted all before them by fire and sword.
- A. D. 409. A pestilence raged in the North of England, and destroyed almost all the inhabitants of the city of York.
- A. D. 410. When Honorius and Theodosius were emperors, a violent pestilence seized Rome : Alarich the Goth besieged the city, and the Romans not having graves enough within, the dead lay unburied, and infected the living : But whom the plague had left, he murdered at the sacking of Rome.
- A. D. 438. A violent pestilence and famine raged in England.
- A. D. 440. It spread into Scotland, and cut off most of the inhabitants of that kingdom.
- A. D. 447. What the sword and famine had spared in England in the former years, a sore pestilence swept away : So that the living scarce sufficed to bury the dead.
- A. D. 454. A dreadful plague spread over all the Eastern Countries.
- A. D. 467. When Leo was emperor, a terrible plague raged in Rome.
- A. D. 470. A great famine and plague broke out in Scotland by continual rain for ten months : In Wales by a great snow ; and in
- A. D. 477. It began in England by vast swarms of locusts, which devoured the fruits of the earth.
- A. D. 480. Another plague cut off many thousands in Scotland.
- A. D. 448. When Zeno was emperor, after a long drowth over all Africa, a famine and pestilence destroyed most of the Africans.
- A. D. 502. A great pestilence and mortality destroyed both man and beast in Scotland.
- A. D. 515. A great famine and plague raged in Britain : and in
- A. D. 523. Another plague cut off many souls in Scotland : and in
- A. D. 527. It prevailed in North Wales : and in
- A. D. 531. It spread into South Wales, and took away great multitudes in both nations.
- A. D. 539. In the beginning of Justinian emperor, the Persians, Saracens, Goths, Vandals, Franks, and other barbarous nations,

nations, made such dreadful devastations and massacres in the empire, that the earth was left uncultivated: this occasioned the most horrible famine in Italy that was ever heard of: In some places they were forced to make bread of acorns, some stooped down to eat grass, but being unable to rise up, they died with some of it in their mouths; some destroyed themselves to prevent the torments of a lingering death. Two women living in a house accustomed to entertain passengers, killed seventeen of them while they slept one after another, and devoured them; and some mothers in the bitterness of hunger murdered and ate their own infants. It was so grievous and mortal, that no less than fifty thousand persons are said to have been starved to death in the Picentin alone, and in Greece many more.

A. D. 544, and 18 of Justinian emperor. A universal pestilence began at Pelusium in Egypt, and from thence spread over the whole world, sparing neither age, sex, constitution nor degree among men; no family, city, country, neither island, cave, nor tops of mountains upon earth. It began with apparitions of evil spirits in human shape, who struck and frightened men so, that they went mad and died immediately; some saw them in their sleep; others fancied they heard a voice telling them, they were enrolled in the number of those that were appointed to die. Some were seized with a deadness upon their spirits, and an inclination to sleep; and unless care was taken to feed them, they starved themselves to death. The sick were generally taken with great and painful swellings in their groin, therefore it was called *pestis inguinalis*. The contagion infected others upon their approach, or touching the infected; nay, upon seeing them at a distance. In the second year of its tyranny it visited Constantinople with that fury, that for four months at first, five, and sometimes ten thousand and upwards died every day. Thus it continued fifty-two years together in one place or another, so that the greatest part of mankind then living may be said to have been destroyed by it.

A. D. 552. A great famine and pestilence began in Scotland, through continual rain for five months.

A. D. 555, 29 Justinian. A plague consumed the Franks and German soldiers, as they invaded Italy, and plundered the temples, &c. as a just judgment upon their sacrilege and barbarity.

A. D. 565. When Justinian the emperor died, that plague broke out in Rome, spread over all Italy, passed into Spain and Portugal; and from Spain in

A. D. 583. It entered into France by an infected ship; and from thence over all Denmark, Sweden, Muscovy, and all the northern countries.

A. D. 590, V. of Mauriti. emperor. A violent plague swept away Pelagius the pope in the first place, and most of the people

ple of Rome. It was occasioned by a great inundation of the Tyber and putrified serpents which lay drowned upon the shore. It began with an inflammation of the groin, and is called *pestis inguinaria*. Many dropt down dead as they sneezed; and this gave the original to that custom among us of saying, *God bless you*. At that time Gregory the Great was chosen his successor, though unwillingly; and in the year 600, composed and first intitled the use of the great sevenfold litany against that public calamity, which was so mortal, that eighty died in an hour; and that litany has been ever since used in the Latin church.

A. D. 625. A grievous famine and plague raged in Britain.

A. D. 664. A raging plague continued in Britain, for the space of five years, first depopulating the southern parts, then the northern, where Tuda, a very pious bishop of Holy-Island, deceased, and many thousands besides. Afterwards it invaded Ireland with great fury.

A. D. 665. Under Constans II. emperor, after it had rained ashes, a dreadful plague began in Italy. It is reported, that a ghost went about sounding a horn, and knocking at every door, and so many knocks as he gave, so many died in that house.

A. D. 678. When Ecgfrid king of Northumberland reigned, there was never a drop of rain in England for three years together: this was followed with a famine and pestilence, which swept away Cedda the bishop of the Mercians, and many thousands. But Viulfrid bishop of York relieved many of the poor Saxons, by teaching them the art of fishing.

A. D. 680. A grievous plague raged again in Rome, and other cities of Italy in July, August and September, which laid Ticinum waste and other cities.

A. D. 681. A great plague raged in England.

A. D. 696. Under Leontius the emperor, a deadly contagion (called the plague of the *buboes*, because people were taken at first with great swellings in the groin, and other parts of the body) broke out in Constantinople, which in the space of five months cut off a vast number of the inhabitants.

A. D. 703. There was a great pestilence in Scotland: and in

A. D. 713. It broke out again there, devouring what had escaped the former.

A. D. 717. Leo II. Isaur. emperor, a deadly plague and famine began in Constantinople after the Saracens had besieged it for three years; which cut off three hundred thousand people in a very short time; besides such a great number of the enemy died, that of 3000 sail, scarcely five returned home. Afterwards it invaded Rome also, and cut off thirty thousand of its inhabitants.

A. D.

A. D. 729. A great plague raged in the city of Norwich.

A. D. 739. A great famine and pestilence spread over Britain, Wales, and Scotland.

A. D. 749. V. Of Constant Copron. emperor, a furious pestilence broke out in Calabria, passing through Sicily into Greece and Thrace, it invaded Constantinople; where it raged with that insatiable thirst for three years together, insomuch that the living were hardly sufficient to bury the dead; and at last, there was scarce ground enough for interment. Though this plague was acknowledged by all to be the immediate finger of God, that it served rather to terrify than reform mankind. It was observed, that they who were seized with this contagion, were doomed to die, by little crosses made as it were with oil on their clothes, which by no art could be removed.

A. D. 762. A great plague spread over Wales.

A. D. 771. A great plague at Chichester cut off thirty-four thousand souls.

A. D. 774. A grievous famine and pestilence spread over all the west of Scotland; and in

A. D. 785. It extended over the whole kingdom.

A. D. 788. A great plague raged in the city of Canterbury.

A. D. 800. Under Charles the Great, a most dreadful pestilence spread over all the East.

A. D. 803. A most grievous pestilence raged in Scotland.

A. D. 820. By the abundance of rain in France for many months, a plague began there, and consumed both men and beasts.

A. D. 823. A great famine and pestilence did much harm in Scotland.

A. D. 825. In the reign of Lewis the Pious, a pestilence killed almost all the inhabitants in France and Germany.

A. D. 836. Such a grievous famine and mortality raged in Wales, that the country was covered over divers places with the carcases of men and beasts.

A. D. 853. A great pestilence spread in many parts of Scotland.

A. D. 856. Lud II. emperor, after a great inundation of the river Tyber, a contagion (called the pestilence of the jaws, because it affected the throat and jaws, with incredible fluxion and pain) infected Rome and cut off many souls.

A. D. 863. A great famine and pestilence raged in Scotland.

A. D. 869. A great famine and mortality continued ten months, when the Danish army lay at York.

A. D. 884. The city of Oxford was then visited with the plague.

A. D. 887. A grievous famine and mortality continued two years in England: and in

A. D.

A. D. 890. It spread into Scotland.

A. D. 897. A great plague raged in England ; by which several bishops and great men died, a vast number of the common people ; and also much cattle.

A. D. 922. A great plague in Scotland swept away many.

A. D. 930. Under Constant. VI. a plague raged in Constantinople, and with much fury almost depopulated that populous city.

A. D. 931. A grievous famine and mortality raged in Wales.

A. D. 936. A most terrible famine began in Scotland, and continued four years ; so that they were ready to eat one another.

A. D. 954. A great pestilence in Scotland cut off above forty thousand souls.

A. D. 961. A great mortality raged in London.

A. D. 964. A violent plague consumed the greatest part of Otho's army, both noble and ignoble.

A. D. 968. A grievous famine and plague depopulated several towns and villages in Britain.

A. D. 982. 9 Otho 11 emperor, a grievous famine and pestilence raged through all the eastern and western empire ; which was thought to be a judgment from heaven, because of the impiety of pope John 16th, a most monstrous atheist. But the people of Lacedemone, being almost all consumed, and being destitute of all human aid, they implored the Divine ; and by the prayers of St. Nico (as Baron. affirms) they were delivered therefrom.

A. D. 988. A terrible pestilence and famine through all Germany, was occasioned by a long drought, which consumed all the fruits of the earth ; whereby many thousands perished in great misery.

A. D. 1006. Basil. and Constant. emperors, a dreadful famine and pestilence wasted Germany, France, Italy, and all the Roman provinces to that degree, that the living not being able to bury the dead, many of them dropt down into the graves along with them. But St. Odilo, abbot of Cluniac, having parted with all that he had to relieve the people from starving : at last he disposed of the crown which the emperor had bestowed upon him ; nay, broke the church plate and ornaments to buy corn for their relief : and finding two boys starved to death in the streets, he stript himself of his flannel waistcoat, wherewith he wrapt the corpses, and so buried them both ; by such acts of charity he supported many thousands from starving, and was a happy means by his prayers and supplications, to put a stop to the plague. What a glorious work is it, for such men to stand in the gap ? like Phineas, they turn away God's anger from his people. Surely they are men greatly beloved of God and man.

A. D.

A. D. 1208. A grievous famine and pestilence raged in Wales.

A. D. 1025. When Canutus the Dane reigned, there was a very great plague in the north of England.

A. D. 1029. Conrad I. emperor, a plague devoured the people of Limosin in France, in such a dreadful manner, that no remedies could prevail against it, until their bishops having made intercession to the body of St. Martiali, their first bishop and patron (as Baronius affirmeth) they were delivered from it: but he might as well have ascribed this to Esculapius, as the old Romans did.

A. D. 1030. Under Romanus II. emperor, so great a plague and famine raged throughout Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, Armenia, and several other provinces, that the inhabitants were forced to disperse themselves into other parts of the empire.

A. D. 1038. Under Conrad II. emperor, in the month of July, a raging plague cut off the greater part of the Imperial army, and most of the inhabitants of the Adriatic shore; it continued three years in Thrace, and laid Pergamus and other cities waste. It was occasioned by the stench of vast swarms of locusts, which (having devoured every kind of fruit) the wind blew into the sea.

A. D. 1042. A grievous famine and plague raged in England: and in

A. D. 1047. It invaded Scotland with much fury.

A. D. 1053. Under Henry III. emperor, a great pestilence swept away a third part of the people of Germany, and other countries; therefore the emperor called a council at Goslar that year, to implore the divine mercy: whereat pope Victor II. was present, and several ecclesiastics of the greatest quality.

A. D. 1066. When Constant. Ducas was emperor, the Uzians, a people of Scythia, passed the Ister, with an army of five hundred thousand men, and made a terrible inundation into the Roman empire, destroying all before them. The pious emperor betook himself to prayer, humiliation and fasting; and afterwards marched with an handful of men; but God sent a dreadful plague, which consumed them, and so that great army was conquered without his arms.

A. D. 1077. When Michael VII. called Ducas, was emperor, a plague and famine raged so furiously in Greece, that the living did scarce suffice to bury the dead; during which the covetous and improvident emperor, (who ought to have relieved the inhabitants with a fatherly affection) lessened the measure of the publick corn in Constantinople, which raised the price of it; and this deservedly brought upon him the surname of Parapinaces, i. e. the quarter of a bushel. The avarice of this emperor rendered him so ungrateful to the people, that he

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resigned the imperial ornaments, and entered into a monastery. So true is the wise man's observation, Prov. xi. 26. *He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him : but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.*

A. D. 1084. A plague in Rome cut off all the army of Henry III. emperor : and

A. D. 1086. A dreadful famine and pestilence raged at that time through the empire.

A. D. 1093. Such a dreadful famine and plague raged in England for three years, that the quick were scarce able to bury the dead.

A. D. 1095. Henry IV. emperor, at the first expedition of the Holy War against the Sarazens, forty thousand soldiers died of the plague in the army of Peter the Hermit : and after the slaughter of one hundred thousand Turks, the plague cut off fifty thousand Christians under Godfrey of Bulloign ; and those that remained were pinched with such a famine, that they could not be restrained from devouring the stinking bodies of those of their enemies which they had killed a little before. This was the fatal beginning of those bloody wars, wherein Christendom has been embroiled.

A. D. 1100. When Alexius was emperor, a famine and pestilence swept off great numbers of Behemond's army, which besieged Dyrrachium against the emperor.

A. D. 1112. There was another plague in England, and also a great murrain of cattle.

A. D. 1167. In the 13th reign of Frid. emperor, a plague cut off in seven days, the chiefest of the nobility, officers, and most part of the imperial army lying then by Rome in great misery.

A. D. 1202. In the time of Alexius, a grievous pestilence spread over the East.

A. D. 1215. In the reign of Henry emperor, a plague broke out among the people of Tongres in the low countries, and swept them almost all off the face of the earth.

A. D. 1220. A violent famine and pestilence raged in Poland for three years ; it began after a dreadful rain the whole summer.

A. D. 1220. Frid. II. emperor, a violent pestilence began at the siege of Damiatta in Egypt, which destroyed so many, that few remained alive in that populous city, and consumed vast numbers of the Sultan's army.

A. D. 1223. Frid. II. emperor, there was such a great mortality among the cattle for three years, that the third part of them died : it began in Hungary, and spread over Germany, Italy, France, and other countries.

(To be concluded in the next number.)

ADDRESS

ADDRESS TO YOUTH.

AS the youth compose so valuable a part of the community ; as some of this class peruse the Magazine, the following extract from Dr. Witherspoon's address to the senior class, just before they left the seminary of learning over which he presided, is recommended by one, who wishes it may be promotive of their interest in time and eternity.

Speaking concerning religion, he observes : It is to all men of the greatest moment.—Some of you are intended for the service of Christ in the ministry. To this we have the universal suffrage, that true religion is absolutely necessary. But I wish those, destined for other employments, may not make a comparison here, unjust in itself, and dangerous to their own souls.—A clergyman without religion, to be sure, is a dreadful character ; but at the close of life, it will be but little comfort to a man, that he must go to the place of torment, not as a minister, but as a lawyer, physician, or merchant. Therefore suffer me to say to all who hear me, that the care of your souls is the one thing needful. All mankind, of every rank, denomination and profession, are sinners by nature. The ministers of the new testament have received a commission to preach the gospel to every creature : “ He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.” I beg of you to consider, the advantages you have enjoyed will be an aggravation of your guilt, if they are unimproved. When young persons, piously educated, burst restraining bands asunder, and are seduced into vicious courses, they commonly run farther than others. After entreating you to lay religion to heart, I must beseech you to guard against being too easily satisfied in a matter of infinite moment. Do not think it enough to be prudent, cautious, or decent in your conduct ; or to attain a character formed upon worldly principles, and governed by worldly motives. True religion must arise from a clear and deep conviction of your lost state by nature and practice, and an unfeigned reliance on the pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace of God. Suffer me earnestly to recommend to all who fear God to apply themselves from their youth to the exercises of piety—a life of prayer and communion with God. This is the source from which a real Christian must derive the secret comfort of his heart ; and which alone will give beauty, consistency and uniformity to an exemplary life. Be companions of them that fear God. Shun as a contagious pestilence the society not only of loose persons, but of those whom you perceive to be infected with the principles of infidelity, or enemies to the power of religion—“ He that

that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

I would further recommend to you a life of diligence and application ; avoid sloth as a dangerous enemy. Multitudes of moderate capacity have been useful in their generation, respected by the public, and successful in life—while those of superior talents from nature, by mere slothfulness and idle habits, or self-indulgence, have lived useless and died contemptible. Is there any instance to be found, of a man's arriving at great reputation or usefulness, without industry and application ?—Let me recommend to you frugality in the management of your affairs. Nothing could be further from my mind than to recommend the temper and conduct of avaricious men, whose sordid souls have hardly any other desire than that of getting pelf. This is not only unbecoming a gentleman and a scholar, but, in my opinion, inconsistent with the character. That frugality which arises from order and economy, is not only consistent with, but is the parent of liberality of sentiment and generosity of conduct. It is the source of beneficence, for no man can bestow out of an empty purse.—The last advice I shall offer you is a sacred, inviolable regard to sincerity and truth. So very sacred a thing is truth, that the very shadow of departure from it is to be avoided. Let me therefore recommend to you a strict, universal and scrupulous regard to truth ; it will give dignity to your character ; it will put order into your affairs ; it will excite the most unbounded confidence, so that whether your views be your own interest, or the service of others, it promises you the most assured success. There is no virtue that has a more powerful influence upon every other, and certainly there is none by which you can draw nearer to God himself, whose distinguishing character is, that he will not, that he cannot lie.



THE MARRIAGE OF A WIFE'S SISTER UNLAWFUL.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

Keep thyself pure.—PAUL.

DEAR SIR,

THE last time I had the pleasure of your company, you said something favouring the *Marriage* of a deceased *Wife's Sister*. As I view it important for all, and especially for men in your bereaved condition, to be determined as to this subject, I take this way to communicate to you my

my thoughts more fully upon it. Such a marriage I cannot but consider under a divine prohibition. Indeed, there is something very forbidding in the idea itself of mingling together the relation of brother and sister, with that of husband and wife, and of mixing in their children the relation of brother and sister with cousin. And brother and sister they are; for she, who is sister to a man's wife, is sister to his own flesh. If there is any kindred between them at all, they are brother and sister-in-law. They call each other brother and sister, and there was never any other term of relationship applied to them by God or man. Being in this relation, the great Jehovah forbids them to intermarry, in that general prohibition, Lev. xviii. 6. "*None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him.*" Men are also forbidden to marry their wives' near kindred, merely because they are such, and no other way related to themselves. See verse 17. Certainly this prohibits marrying her sister, who is one of her nearest kindred. And men are forbidden to marry other kindred, more remote than their wives' sister. I think none will consider an uncle's wife so near, which is plainly forbidden in verse 14. There are however still more plain and direct prohibitions of this connexion. Verse 16. "*Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife; it is thy brother's nakedness.*" Also, Lev. xx. 21. "*If a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing; he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness.*" Here marriage is prohibited between a man and his brother's wife, who are in the very same relation to each other, as a woman and her sister's husband. In the former case, two brothers would have the same woman; in the latter, two sisters would have the same man. For a man to have his brother's wife or widow, would be to have his sister-in-law, and she her brother-in-law. For a woman to have her sister's husband is to have her brother-in-law, and he his sister-in-law. Thus the relation is exactly the same in both cases, on whatever side we look at it. As in the one case, this relation is plainly and repeatedly forbidden to marry, so of consequence in the other; for it is to be observed, that these prohibitions respect certain relations as such. Had they respected only certain individuals, these must all have been named; but as they have respect to certain relations, the mentioning of all these was sufficient: God had reason to consider this instruction plain enough for mankind, whom he has endowed with such powers of reasoning and understanding. He knew that from these and other general precepts they might learn their duty, if they would honestly examine; and if they would not, they could have no excuse for ignorance. He would be thought perversely disposed, rather than ignorant of duty, who should claim liberty to do every thing, which is not forbidden in so many express words. God
has,

has, in every part of his word, left more or less room for the exercise of our reason, as he designed to call us to an account for the use we make of this noble faculty. But this connexion is so plainly forbidden, that very little is left to be reasoned out. Though the relation is mentioned but in one case, no reason can be given why the prohibition does not apply to it in both cases. Other of these prohibitions are viewed thus. Marriage is expressly forbidden in the first chapter mentioned, between a man and his granddaughter, and a man and his uncle's wife; while nothing is said in the Bible against a woman's having her grandson, or her aunt's husband. But who, for this reason, thinks the latter more lawful than the former? or that they are not equally against the law of God? All Christians, who have treated upon this subject, have considered it just as incestuous and criminal, for a woman to have her uncle or grandson, as for a man to have his aunt or granddaughter. So marriage between a woman and her deceased sister's husband is just as incestuous, and contrary to God's law, as between a man and his deceased brother's wife. A prohibition of the one is a prohibition of the other. A man and his sister-in-law on one side being forbidden to marry, and this merely and expressly because they are too near of kin, is a full prohibition of marriage between him and his sister-in-law, on the other side. No reason can be given, why marriage is not as criminal, and as really prohibited, between a man and one sister-in-law, as between him and another sister-in-law; between him and his wife's sister, as between him and his brother's wife. Thus evident is it, that men are forbidden by God to marry or cohabit with their sisters-in-law by their deceased wives. It appears wrong from the general prohibition against approaching near kindred, and from more distant relations being prohibited, and from this very relation, on the other side, being expressly forbidden. The common sense of mankind is also against it, as appears from all sober people's viewing lascivious intercourse, between a man and his living wife's sister, more criminal, than between him and another unrelated single female. But why should this distinction be made in the minds of people, unless because there is but one crime in the latter case, while in the former there are two, incest added to adultery? However, we are far from resting the matter upon this, it being evidently contrary to the written law of God, for a man and his wife's sister to make this approach to each other in any case.

And that these commands were in their nature moral, and not ceremonial, or peculiar to the Israelites, is sufficiently evident, from the Canaanites incurring God's displeasure, for doing the things here forbidden, before the former nation, or these revealed precepts, came into their land. See Lev. xviii. 24, to the end,

end, and Chap. xx. 22, 23. Here the Israelites are solemnly enjoined to observe these prohibitions respecting marrying kindred, and some similar crimes, because the heathens had done all these abominations, and had defiled themselves in all these things, and for these abominable customs had been swept away by the judgments of God. But the holy and righteous God could not have seen abomination in the Canaanites, nor have executed judgments upon them, for doing what he had not revealed to them as criminal, unless it was contrary to his moral law, which is binding upon all men, without divine revelation. "Where there is no law, there is no transgression." And as it was the duty of these nations not to approach near kindred, though they had no concern with the ceremonial law, and had no knowledge of any written precepts, it has ever been and still is the duty of all nations to abstain from this approach. These commands are as really of a moral nature, as the fourth, fifth, or sixth in the decalogue, and therefore no less binding upon all men. The latter may be dispensed with in cases of necessity and mercy, and so might the former. The priests in the temple profaned the Sabbath, and were blameless; children ought not to obey their parents' commands, which are evidently unreasonable and wicked; it is no crime to save our own life or that of our neighbour, by killing an assassin; nor was it any more criminal for the first sons and daughters of Adam to intermarry, since this was the only way by which they could comply with God's institution of twain becoming one flesh, or his command to be fruitful and replenish the earth. This was, in that case, pointed to as duty, by his creating but one pair. And his setting the command respecting incest aside, in any other case than that of necessity, no more disproves its moral nature, than his commanding Abraham to slay his son disproves the morality of the command against murder. What God said and did respecting the Canaanites must be allowed a full demonstration, that these prohibitions are moral, that is, result from the nature of things, are dictated by unprejudiced reason, and so binding upon all men, without being enjoined by revelation. Also this is further evident, from such approaches to near kindred being considered criminal in the days of Lot, as is clear from the conduct of his daughters. And being now expressly forbidden by God, who is the absolute Lord of the universe, such connexions must be exceedingly criminal in all, who are favoured with both the light of nature and revelation.

But notwithstanding the marriage of a wife's sister is so evidently unlawful, the inclination of some towards such a connexion has made them endeavour to justify it, and their arguments have had too much influence upon others. I shall therefore briefly consider what has been advanced in favour of such

such marriages, and in opposition to what has been here observed.——And it is said,

1. "These are only prohibitions of adultery, or forbid us to have the wife or husband of our near kindred, while they are living."

Ans. Since near kindred are distinctly pointed out, as the subjects of these prohibitions, it follows from this argument, that adultery is no crime, except between near relations. But this is directly in the face of the seventh commandment. It also follows, that a man may marry the wife of his nearest dead relation, since she is free from the law of her husband, and there is no code of prohibitions against incest in the Scriptures, if these of Moses are not such.——But no sober person will admit either of these inferences, and therefore the argument must be thrown away. And that these prohibitions are not merely against adultery is evident, from this crime's being distinctly forbidden by itself, in a passage of the connexion.

2. "The Israelites were commanded to marry their brethren's widows, when unmarried brethren remained."

Ans. God had a right to give this command, which respected only a few cases, and by no means disannulled the general law. This was only to take place, when a brother died childless, that seed might be raised up to him, which should preserve his family from extinction, in order that their lineage might be clearly traced down till the coming of Christ, who was to be of the seed of David. But this command ceased with the Jewish dispensation, to which only it belonged. And instead of weakening, it strengthens our argument, by proving that a man might not marry his sister-in-law, without an express permission or command of God. But this never had any respect to the marriage of a wife's sister, as women were not required to raise up seed to their deceased sisters. Nor do such persons think of connecting on this account. They do not view themselves bound to marry each other, and no other persons, as was the case with the Jewish brother-in-law and widow. Besides, if this argument had any weight, it would set aside all the Scriptures, forbidding the marriage of a brother's wife, and give all brothers and sisters-in-law full liberty to marry. It therefore proves too much, and so proves nothing to this point.

3. "There is nothing in the New-Testament against marrying a wife's sister; therefore it cannot be unlawful."

Ans. How does it appear, that every thing is lawful, which is not forbidden in the New-Testament? To suppose this, at once destroys all the authority of the Old, whose precepts can be set aside, only by being countermanded by God. And Paul seems to confirm the ancient laws against incest, by urging the church of Corinth to punish an instance of the crime, without

without giving them any new code respecting it.—Nor is it granted, that there is nothing in the New Testament against this very connexion. The inspired Baptist said to Herod, “It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife.” And admitting that her husband Philip was then living, yet who knows that John did not here reprove the double crime of incest and adultery? This connexion’s being so clearly prohibited in the Old Testament gives full reason to believe, that he here reprov’d incest.

4. “When a man’s wife dies, all his relation to her family dies with her; therefore he is as much at liberty to marry her sister, as any other woman.”

Ans. This is not true; for he stands in the same relation to her still, as he acknowledges on her tomb-stone. Death releases him from the law of his wife, so that he may marry another without sin; but he is still through her related to all her family connexions. Her parents are his parents; her brothers and sisters are his brothers and sisters; and her sister is still aunt to his children, as well as her parents their grandparents. Who would think it right for a man to marry his deceased wife’s mother, as their ages and other circumstances sometimes sufficiently agree? But if all relation to the family died with his wife, he is just as much at liberty to marry her mother, as her sister, or any other woman, when the first of these connexions is as convenient. And were they equally customary, it would appear no more abhorrent for a woman to be both grandmother and step-mother to the same children, than for the same woman to be their aunt and step-mother.

5. “A man is forbidden in Scripture to take a wife to her sister in her life time, which implies that he may take her sister to wife after she is deceased.”

Ans. This is to mistake the sense of the passage. It evidently prohibits bigamy, or the taking of one wife in addition to another still living, as all women are in a general sense sisters, and might be more properly so called, were they both to become one flesh with the same man. And those, who have criticised upon the Hebrew phrase here rendered *a wife to her sister*, say it signifies a wife to her equal, or one to another. It is certainly used in this sense in Ex. xxvi. 3, respecting coupling the curtains of the tabernacle. This idea is also confirmed by the reason assigned in the prohibition, viz. its tending to vex his wife, which was exemplified by Jacob’s and Elkanah’s wives, who were a source of vexation to each other. And the latter of these instances shows us, that this was not peculiar to natural sisters; consequently the prohibition respected women in general. But to suppose this passage only forbidding a man

to marry his living wife's sister, is making it allow him to marry any other woman in her life time. All who are against polygamy, which is unreasonable and unscriptural, must reject this explanation of the passage, and take it in our sense.

6. "The sister of a man's deceased wife is most likely to be kind to his children, which is a reason for such marriages."

Ans. This is leaving the command of God, and consulting our own convenience, as the only rule of our duty. If we may do this, a man may marry his wife's or own mother when widows, or his own sister or daughter, as well as his wife's sister. These would all be as likely as she to treat his children kindly. But our convenience is never to be urged against the divine command.

7. "Some learned and pious ministers think it is lawful to marry a wife's sister."

Ans. And many more think it is unlawful. By far the greatest part of the clergy now on the stage, it is presumed, consider it a forbidden connexion. Such also was the belief of all divines of former ages, a small number excepted. Henry VIII. of England collected the opinions of most of the clergy and universities in Europe, relative to his having his sister-in-law. But nearly all gave their opinions against it, as contrary to the law of God, except a few of those who held to the validity of the Pope's dispensation, with which he had entered the connexion.* The numerous and pious assembly of divines, who composed the Westminster confession of faith and catechisms, though more than a century later, were of the same opinion. The following are their words, taken from the chapter on marriage. "Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden in the word: nor can such incestuous marriages be rendered lawful by any law of men or consent of parties, so as those persons may live together as man and wife. The man may not marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own; nor the woman of her husband's kindred nearer of blood than of her own." And that the church, as well as parliament of England agree with this may be seen, in the list of unlawful marriages generally printed in English and Scotch Bibles.—But still good ministers are fallible, and this is suggested as the reason why some such in New-England have of late thought these marriages lawful. They are far, however, from being the majority of the clergy; and if they were, their approbation would not make the connexion right, as all may see it forbidden in the Scriptures, which are infallible.

8. "I cannot, says one, think there is any harm in marrying a wife's sister."

Ans.

* See Burnet's history of the reformation in England.

Ans. This, perhaps, is the most common argument in favour of the connexion, viz. an unwillingness to believe what cannot be confuted by Scripture or reason. It is also very influential, if we may judge from the number of Universalists, Deists, and Atheists it has made and is making in the world. It would be vain therefore for me to attempt its refutation here. There is little hopes of convincing persons, who pay more regard to their own mere thoughts or feelings, than to the authority of God's word.*

Having shown the unlawfulness of marrying a wife's sister, and taken notice of what is advanced in favour of it, a few inferences may now be drawn.

1. It follows, as was hinted in a quotation, that no human laws can authorize the marriage of a wife's sister, or any other near kindred. God forbids them to approach each other, and is not his authority superior to that of any human legislators? Can men join together what he has put asunder? Certainly God is to be obeyed, rather than man.—But the laws of almost all Christian nations agree with his, as to this relation. No exceptions have come to my certain knowledge, besides the act of this Commonwealth. Perhaps a sister state or two may have enacted the same. As I sincerely respect our legislators and their laws in general, and am reluctant to say any thing to the disadvantage of either, as well as regret that any evil should be countenanced by so high authority, I am very sorry the divine laws, as to this point, had not been more thoroughly examined, before this act took place. But it obliges none to enter such a connexion; and, were it otherwise, our Creator has the first claim to our obedience.

2. It follows, that no officer, ecclesiastical or civil, can join a man and his wife's sister in lawful marriage, or constitute them husband and wife. It may be attempted, and they may afterwards cohabit, and be married persons in the eye of human laws, which tolerate the connexion; but they are not married, in the view of God's law. Neither man nor angel can join those together, whom he hath put asunder, by a solemn command. They dwell together as unmarried persons, notwithstanding all that men in any office can do, towards joining them in marriage. They are viewed in this light by the civil laws of all other Christian countries. In no other Christian nation could the woman or children obtain a share in the estate, were it left without a will. This is to treat her as a concubine, and them as bastards.

3. It

* The writer acknowledges himself considerably indebted to the Rev. Doctor EDWARDS' Sermon on this subject, which he once read, though six or seven years ago.

3. It follows, that such couples have no reason to blame ministers of the gospel, or justices of the peace, for refusing to marry them. No person is to be blamed, for refusing to do what he is fully persuaded is impossible; nor for choosing to obey God and his own conscience, rather than the inclination or command of any human being upon earth.

4. It follows, that when a man and his wife's sister have by any means entered this connexion, they ought not to continue in it. The prohibition is not merely against their first approach, but is equally against every other. Their having once cohabited is no reason why they should dwell together in this unlawful connexion. Our having begun to do evil is no reason why we should continue in sin. This would afford all men a plea for giving themselves up to iniquity. The command is, "Let him that stole steal no more;" and he, who has been guilty of incest, should immediately cease from this crime. The contrary supposition seems horrid, viz. that, after a brother and sister-in-law have, through ignorance or rashness, taken each other as husband and wife, they ought not to separate. Nor does it avail any thing for them to plead, that they are now bound together by contract. All civilians and divines hold, that an after contract cannot destroy a previous obligation; and surely no engagement to our fellow-creature can give us liberty to disobey our Creator. Such a marriage vow is unlawful, being what the parties had no right to make, and therefore is not binding. The crime consists in forming such a connexion, and not in breaking off from it. It is most shameful to live together in incest, but honourable to reform. Agreeably to this the apostle urged the church of Corinth to severely discipline an incestuous member, and afterwards exhorted them to forgive and comfort him, in consequence of his repentance and reformation. No incestuous contract can excuse the parties, in living together in this sin, any more than the forbidden contracts of the Jews with strange wives, in the days of Nehemiah, could render it lawful for them not to separate.

5. Neighbours and acquaintances cannot countenance such kindred, in entering this relation, without offending God. By encouraging others in what he forbids, we become sharers in their iniquity. Though we should treat persons of all characters with humanity and civility, we should be cautious about making the incestuous our companions and associates; lest we so far give them our consent, as to be "partakers with adulterers."—Nor may ministers of the gospel afford such conduct the consent of silence. They should bear public and private testimony against these and all other infractions of God's law. They are set up as watchmen to espy iniquity, and sound the alarm,

alarm, that the people may avoid the danger of divine judgments. Such incestuous beginnings ought to be checked by all classes of men; for we know not where they will end, as they are carrying us on towards all the abominations of Canaan and Sodom. If Paul were living among us, they would procure us his sharp rebukes, as such conduct did the Corinthians; for though marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled, yet every description of unclean persons God will judge.

Thus, my friend, I have given you my thoughts upon this subject. If they shall help to rightly establish your mind respecting it, this will sufficiently reward the pains of your friend and servant.

Massachusetts, January 10, 1801.



THE CONSISTENCE BETWEEN THE INVITATIONS OF THE
GOSPEL MADE TO ALL MEN, AND THE NE-
CESSITY OF SOVEREIGN GRACE TO MAKE
ANY WILLING TO ACCEPT.

TO reconcile these has been thought, by most men, impossible; it will not, therefore, be thought strange, if the writer should fail in the attempt.

It cannot be denied, however, by any, but that these two doctrines are as clearly revealed in the scriptures, as the ten commandments; viz. that God invites all men to come to him for life; & yet that all who come are drawn by sovereign grace.

We may inquire then, first, on what ground the invitation is given.

And, secondly, on what ground the necessity of sovereign grace is predicated.

And then perhaps the consistence of the propositions will be more apparent.

1. We may notice, that the invitations of the gospel are given, on the ground of the all-sufficiency of the atonement of Christ, and on the consistence of the mercy and justice of God, in pardoning the penitent sinner for the sake of Christ, in whom he believes, as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth in Jesus. Rom. iii. 26. Agreeably to this, we find that the scriptures are full of declarations concerning the sufficiency of the atonement of Christ, and of invitations to come to Christ for eternal life.

He tasted death for every man—"He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

There

There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Heb. ii. 9. 1 John ii. 2. 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. On this ground of the all-sufficiency of the atonement of Christ, it is consistent with the justice of God, to pardon every penitent and believing sinner. For, in Christ mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have embraced each other. Ps. lxxxv. 10.

Hence, there is nothing to prevent the invitation of God to guilty men to come to Christ *that they might have life.*

Accordingly, Thus saith the Lord, "*Look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth ; for I am God, and there is none else.*" Isa. xlv. 22. "*Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and be that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price.*" Isa. lv. 1. "*Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.*" John vii. 37. "*And the Spirit and the bride say come ; and let him that heareth say come ; and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely.*" Rev. xxii. 17.

Having shown on what ground the invitations of the gospel are given, it may be shown,

Secondly, on what ground the necessity of sovereign grace is predicated.

Here, it must be kept in mind, that the invitations of the gospel are given to those, and to those only, who are at enmity against God and against his gospel. Rom. v. 6, 8, 10. For, if they were not enemies, they would not need the grace of the gospel to reconcile them to God.

It must, therefore, be by the sovereign grace of God that any are saved. For, the most endearing and earnest invitation will be slighted by an enemy, if he imagines, that he can do without the thing, which is proposed in the invitation.

And this is exactly the case with mankind, who are all under sin. They are enemies to God in their hearts, which they show by their wicked works ; and they do not naturally see their need of a Saviour, neither do they like the character of the Saviour proposed. Hence, *he is despised and rejected of men.* Is. liii. 3.

There is, therefore, not the least ground for the opinion, that any of mankind will be saved upon the bare invitation of the gospel, without some new principle, wrought in them, by a supernatural power, to incline them to love that, which they, as sinners, reject and despise. For they *will not come to Christ, that they might have life ;* but when invited, every one begins to make excuse, or utterly refuses to come.

If this be a true statement of the case, which can be proved both from Scripture and from plain facts, of which every convinced sinner has an evidence in his own conscience, it will follow,

low, that the sovereign grace of God is necessary to convince, convert and save sinners, notwithstanding the offer of salvation is freely made to all.

Some may object to the use of the word *sovereign* in this connexion ; but as God acts as a righteous sovereign in all his works, and especially in having mercy on whom he will have mercy, there can be no impropriety in the use of the term.

But it may be further objected, that there seems to be an impropriety in saying, that God invites all to come to him that they might have life, while he is determined to leave some to perish in their sins.

This objection has no force, if we consider that the invitations of the gospel are grounded on the sufficiency of the atonement of Christ, and on the consistence of the justice and mercy of God, in pardoning sinners, who repent and come to Christ ; and if we consider further, that there is nothing to hinder the salvation of the sinner in this way, but his own obstinacy in refusing to repent and to come. For, *all things are ready*.

Since the obstinacy of sinners is so great as to refuse the invitations of a Saviour, God is just, when he leaves them to perish in their sins. But if, in mercy to their souls, who will have no mercy on themselves, God calls any, by his special grace, it is a sovereign act of mercy ; and God will appear perfectly consistent with himself, and with all the ideas of justice, righteousness and goodness, which mankind can form, while *many are called, but few are chosen*. For, God might certainly have left us all to perish in our sins, if he had seen fit ; if, therefore, he saves any of us, by his special grace, by effectually calling us to glory and to virtue, by his Holy Spirit, enlightening our minds and renewing our heart, it is of his own sovereign grace. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* Titus iii. 5.

1. We learn, from these remarks, that every impenitent sinner is without excuse, under the light of the gospel. For, it is just as consistent for God to invite sinners to embrace the gospel, as it is to command them to obey the law ; and their not doing either, being in consequence of their own opposing hearts, leaves them without excuse.

If sinners were commanded to do a thing which is impossible for them to do, if they had a heart to do it, they would have a sufficient excuse not to do it. But, as they are commanded to do no more than they could do, if disposed to do it, they must feel themselves condemned. Hence, our Saviour says to all sinners ; “ *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish ; and, he that believeth not shall be damned.*” Luke xiii. 5, Mark xvi. 16.

2. This

2. This subject teaches all true believers in Christ, to be much engaged in acts of penitence and gratitude toward God. For, if they had been let alone, without the special operations of the Spirit of God, their obstinacy against Christ would have proved their utter and everlasting destruction. For, *by nature they were the children of wrath even as others, being the children of disobedience, deceived, serving diverse lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.* Titus iii. 3.

A LETTER

TO A STUDENT OF HARVARD COLLEGE, FROM HIS
PRECEPTOR.

MY YOUNG FRIEND,

THOUGH you are no longer under my immediate care, my concern for your welfare, and my wishes to see you become respectable and useful in life are undiminished. Ever since your entrance into College, it has been my intention to communicate to you some serious and affectionate advice, which I hope may be of use to you in your present situation; and whatever is of real use to you now, cannot fail to be beneficial in future life, and, indeed, through the whole of your existence.

The situation of a young gentleman at College is highly interesting. Expectations are justly formed concerning such, which are not formed concerning others. The three learned professions are expected to be filled almost wholly by those, who have received a college education. On the character and talents of those, by whom these professions are filled, the prosperity of a country, with respect to both church and state, principally depends. When the learned men of any country become mere smatterers in learning, the reign of ignorance is about to commence; when they become greatly depraved, a deluge of iniquity may soon be expected.

The advantages you now enjoy for laying, with respect to literary acquisitions, a broad and solid foundation for future honour and usefulness in life, are at least equal to those enjoyed in any University in the United States. No moments of your life can be more precious than those now on the wing. Your college course will soon be run. In order to make the most of your present advantages, it is necessary to regard *method* in the disposition of your time—to appropriate particular hours to Languages, Mathematics, Philosophy, History, Ethics, Theol-

ogy

ogy, &c. In this appropriation, you must necessarily have a particular regard to the exercises prescribed by the college laws. But you will have many hours, especially in the latter part of your collegiate course, which will be more at your own disposal. On the improvement of these, much depends.

I trust I need not enjoin upon you a cheerful and conscientious obedience to college government, nor a strict punctuality in your attention to stated lessons. Good scholars are not apt to call in question the utility of any of the exercises required by the laws. If the makers of the laws are not wiser than you, why are you put under their direction? If you are capable of directing yourself, why should your parents be at the expense of supporting you at college? As you advance in life, you will be more and more convinced, that all the sciences are mutual helpers of each other, so that no one can say to another, "I have no need of thee." You will, therefore, not treat any one with neglect.

But while you are engaged with zeal and diligence in your literary pursuits, I trust you will not forget that "one thing is needful." Religion is infinitely more important than all your other pursuits. You will, therefore, endeavour to keep this habitually in view, in all your studies and exercises. Should you be able to grasp all the human learning of all ages and countries of the world, and yet be destitute of the wisdom which is from above, you would still be blind and ignorant, compared with the most illiterate of those, who are truly illuminated by the gospel. There is no other discernment, which will bear a comparison with that, by which spiritual things are discerned. You will therefore neglect all other books rather than the Bible, that *book of books*, in which alone are contained "the words of eternal life." This holy book gives you information, and the only authentic information, concerning "the creation of the world; the dispensations of Providence and the economy of grace; the transactions of the patriarchs; the exodus of the children of Israel, their journey through the wilderness and settlement in Canaan; their law, priesthood and ritual; the exploits of their great men, wrought through faith; their sins and captivities; their repentances and restorations;—the advent of Messiah, with its effects and consequences; his incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, kingdom and priesthood; the effusion of the Spirit; the conversion of the nations; the rejection of the Jews; the establishment, increase and perpetuity of the Christian church; the end of the world; the general judgment; the condemnation of the wicked, and the final triumph of the righteous with their Lord and King. This volume, like the Paradise of Eden, affords us in perfection every thing that groweth elsewhere; "every tree

No. 11. Vol. II. G c g that

that is pleasant to the sight and good for food ;” and above all what was there lost, but is here restored, *the tree of life in the midst of the garden*. The fairest productions of human wit, after a few perusals, like gathered flowers, wither in our hands, and lose their fragranc y ; but these unfading plants of Paradise become, as we are accustomed to them, still more beautiful ; their bloom appears to be daily heightened ; fresh odours are emitted, and new sweets extracted from them. He, who hath once tasted their excellencies, will desire to taste them again ; and he, who tastes them oftenest, will relish them best.” I hope you will not fail to read some portion of this incomparable book every day, even if it be no more than half a chapter, or a short psalm ; and let your reading always be accompanied with serious meditation, and prayer to God for a blessing on his word. If you will adopt this method, I can assure you from my own experience, that the more you read, the more you will admire that holy Book, the more fully will you be convinced of its divine origin, and that its heavenly mines can never be exhausted.

If you entertain any doubts as to the truth of revealed religion, which is not unfrequently the case with persons at your time of life, and who are engaged in the studies to which you are now attending, I would recommend to you an attentive and prayerful perusal of *Paley’s Evidences of Revealed Religion*, and *Fuller’s Gospel its own Witness*, which, if you do, with a sincere desire of discovering the truth, I will venture to predict, that in due time all your doubts will be removed, and that you will have all joy and peace in believing. There is such a thing as *science falsely so called*, in which scholars are in peculiar danger of being bewildered, and against which you cannot be too much on your guard. It was justly observed by the great BACON, that “a little philosophy disposes the mind to atheism, but *depth in philosophy brings the mind about to religion*.”

You are coming on the stage at a time when infidels are more bold, and perhaps, at the same time, more subtle than at any former period ; it is therefore necessary that you be peculiarly cautious that you “cease from the counsel which causeth to err from the words of knowledge ;” and that you “beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy,” &c. on which last words President Dwight has published an excellent discourse, addressed to the senior class of Yale College, which I would strongly recommend to your serious perusal, particularly the latter part of it.

To the prayerful reading of the scriptures and other religious books, all your leisure hours, on Lord’s days, will, I hope, be devoted. In this manner you may, on this day, which by too many is considered as mere leisure time, treasure up a large share

share of that knowledge, which alone can make you wise unto salvation. But in order to this, there must be a surrender of your heart to God. This is what God requires of you, and it is your reasonable service. "My son, give me thine heart." Pray for God's grace, without which you can do nothing acceptably, that you may be enabled to make this surrender in sincerity.

There are, in a moral and religious view, but two kingdoms in the world. The one is the kingdom of Christ, the other of Satan. You cannot, my young friend, be indifferent to which of these you belong, nor too speedy in making your choice; for you know not what a day may bring forth. Do not be satisfied with a mere speculative belief. That religion, which does not take deep hold of the heart and affections, will fail its possessor in the time of his greatest need. Suffer not yourself to be satisfied with the form, without the power of godliness.

I conclude with my affectionate wishes and fervent prayers for your improvement in all kinds of useful knowledge, *especially that which is connected with eternal life.*

PAIDEUTES.

MARCH 5, 1805.

A LETTER

To a Friend, who was a professed Advocate for the Doctrine of Universal Salvation.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I OFTEN think of your state of mind in regard to religion, and sometimes with deep concern. Should you build your hope of future happiness on the doctrine of universal salvation, how awful would be your situation, should that fail you in the time of your greatest need! This has been the case with some, and no doubt will be the case with others. Should you be so happy as to see this doctrine as I believe it appears to every one, who views it in the pure light of revealed truth, and seasonably take refuge in the only ark of safety, you will feel like a man who has escaped a tremendous precipice, on the very brink of which he had been walking for years without seeing it, and every moment in danger of being dashed in pieces. But "the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God." Pray daily for divine light, and that you may be willing to receive the truth in the love of it.

I have

I have neither time nor inclination, nor do I think it would answer any good purpose to enter into a formal argument with you on this subject. If you will not be convinced by Moses and the prophets, Christ and the apostles, neither would you be persuaded though one rose from the dead. If the solemn conclusion of our Saviour's description of the day of judgment, in the 25th chapter of Matt. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment," &c. does not put the matter beyond all dispute in your mind, I see not but you must "wait the great teacher, *death*." For my own part, I can hardly conceive it possible that language should be plainer. To say that the wicked shall not go away into everlasting punishment,—what is it, but to give the Saviour the lie? Is it not exactly similar to the language of the old serpent, "Ye shall not surely die?" But if nothing can shake your belief of this doctrine, let me entreat you to keep it to yourself, and not be chargeable with joining the old serpent in deluding others, by saying to them, "Ye shall not surely die."

I am every day more and more convinced that very little good is derived from disputes about the doctrines of revealed religion. When God sees fit to open our eyes we shall see, and be brought out of darkness into marvellous light; and he has promised that if we ask we shall receive, &c. i. e. if we ask aright. One fact will have more weight with many, than a thousand of the most ingenious arguments; instead, therefore, of reasoning with you, I will mention facts.

I have lately read in the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, 2d. Vol. (a work, with which, as well as with the Massachusetts Missionary Magazine, I wish all my friends were intimately acquainted) "Remarks and facts illustrative of the danger of adopting false principles of religion, which I transcribe for your serious and prayerful perusal. (I say *prayerful*, for I do not think we have any encouragement to hope for success in our inquiries after religious truth, unless they be accompanied with prayer.) The writer, after mentioning an instance of an amiable young man of his acquaintance, who, in consequence of becoming a convert to universalism, threw off his sober and regular habits, became profane, contentious, dissolute, and regardless of religious institutions and restraints, thus proceeds:

"I have been acquainted with another person, who died a few years since, who, in health, disbelieved the Divinity of Christ, and believed that all men will be saved. He was a person very fond of disputing. I saw him when in health and had frequent disputes with him on these subjects. I told him that though he was satisfied with his scheme in health, it would fail

fail him in the near view of death. He had a few months before been very sick. I reminded him of his sickness, and asked him whether he was then satisfied with his principles, and was willing to die by them. He said he was not, but was much distressed in his mind, lest they should not prove true. I asked him whether it was safe trusting to a scheme, which would not support him when he most needed support. He acknowledged it was not, but added, he was not so well confirmed in his sentiments then, as he had since been ; but now he was willing to die by them. I told him it was altogether probable he would change his mind when he came to look death in the face, and that as he had made one trial, and found no comfort in the principles he had embraced, he would act a wise part to renounce them, and endeavour to fix his hopes on a more firm basis. He still persisted in his error. Soon after this, he was visited with sickness, during which time, I frequently saw him. His confidence was shaken. He said that though he had felt confirmed in the doctrine of universal salvation, yet now he began to fear he was in an error. As his disease increased, his fears were more alarmed. He now did not find that evidence in support of his doctrine, which he thought he did before. Conscience was alarmed. The character of a holy God came into view. His confidence was gone, and with it his hope of divine mercy. He frequently asked with apparent solicitude, "What shall I do ? I must relinquish the hope of all mankind being saved, and as I have never become holy, but depended on being saved in my sins, I can have no hope of the mercy of God. As for Jesus Christ, I know him not, and cannot believe in his divinity ; and therefore cannot embrace him as God-man mediator. I can hope only in God's mercy without regard to an atonement." He was told that God displayed his mercy in saving sinners, only through Jesus Christ as the great atoning sacrifice, and that out of Christ, he was a consuming fire. He then said he had no hope. "But O," said he, "whither shall I fly, or what can I do ?" He was indeed a most pitiable object. His eyes seemed to roll in anguish. Terror took hold upon him. The view of a holy God filled him with distress. He kept calling on all about him for help. His strength failed, but his fears became greater and greater, without any sensible alteration until he expired."

The writer adds, "the above descriptions are not fictions, but realities. I choose to conceal their names and my own, out of tenderness to the surviving friends, but am willing the facts should be published in hope they may serve as a beacon to warn others of the danger of such erroneous sentiments."

"Oh, that sinners might tremble at the thought of embracing such pernicious principles. Let them admit nothing into their
their

their scheme of religion, which will not encourage a holy life and yield peace in the hour of death. There is no necessity of flying to such vain refuges, if they are willing to lay aside their sins and become holy; and the scriptures of truth assure us, that, *without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.*"

I leave the above to your serious and deliberate perusal and reperusal, requesting you often to ask yourself, as in the presence of the heart-searching God, "Have I no reason to fear that my confidence will fail me in the solemn hour of death?" How dreadful the thought! Remember, the apostle Paul was "alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and he died."

And now, my dear friend, "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace," and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.

March 13, 1805.

PHILOS.

ANECDOTES.

OF A GENTLEMAN AND HIS SERVANTS.

Spare to Spend.

The following Anecdote was related many years ago in a Sermon at the Tabernacle, by Mr. Whitfield.

TWO persons, who were employed in collecting money for some public charity, knocked at the door of a certain gentleman, intending to solicit his donation. While waiting there, they overheard the master of the house severely reproofing his servants for the waste of a small piece of candle. Judging from this piece of extreme parsimony that he was a covetous man; one of them proposed that they should lose no more time in waiting there, but go on to another house. The other person, however, thought it best to stay. At length they were introduced; when the gentleman, having read their case, immediately presented them with five guineas. The collectors, so agreeably disappointed, could not conceal their surprise; which being observed by the donor, he desired to know why they expressed so much wonder at the gift. "The reason, Sir," said

said one of them, "is this ; we happened to hear you severely blaming your servants for losing an inch of candle, and expected nothing from a person, who, we feared, was so parsimonious." "Gentlemen," replied he, "it is true, I am very exact in the economy of my affairs. I cannot endure the waste of any thing, however small its value ; and I do this, that I may save, out of a moderate income, something to give to God and religion."

The moral is obvious. Masters and mistresses of families, suffer no extravagance ! Spare unnecessary expense ! spare, that you may have to spend for God. And you, servants, avoid profusion and waste ! Think not your masters covetous, because careful. It becomes both them and you to be careful that there may be somewhat "to give to him that needeth."

"Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost."

☞ *A copy of the above anecdote, pasted on the wall of a kitchen, may probably have a good effect.*



OF COL. GARDINER.

ON DUELLING.

COL. Gardiner received a challenge ; but Col. Gardiner was a Christian. "I am afraid of sinning," said he ; "but you know I am not afraid of fighting ;" and thus declined the challenge.

Query. Did this answer imply that he was a coward ?

This anecdote strongly marks the difference between *the man of the world and the Christian.*



POETRY.



A TALE,

Founded on Fact, which happened Jan. 1779.

WHERE Humber pours his rich commercial stream,
There dwelt a wretch, who breath'd but to blaspheme ;
In subterraneous caves his life he led,
Black as the mine in which he wrought for bread.

When

When on a day, emerging from the deep,
A Sabbath day (such Sabbaths thousands keep)
The wages of his weekly toil he bore
To buy a cock---whose blood might win him more ;
As if the noblest of the feather'd kind
Were but for battle and for death design'd ;
As if the consecrated hours were meant
For sport to minds on cruelty intent.
It chanc'd (such chances Providence obey !)
He met a fellow-lab'rer on the way,
Whose heart the same desires had once inflam'd ;
But now the savage temper was reclaim'd.
Persuasion on his lips had taken place ;
For all plead well who plead the cause of grace.
His iron heart with scripture he assail'd ;
Woo'd him to hear a sermon, and prevail'd.
His faithful bow the mighty preacher drew,
Swift, as the lightning glimpse, the arrow flew ;
He wept, he trembled, cast his eyes around
To find a worse than he ; but none he found.
He felt his sins, and wonder'd he should feel ;
Grace made the wound, and grace alone could heal.
Now, farewell oaths, and blasphemies, and lies,
He quits the sinner's for the martyr's prize.
That holy day was wash'd with many a tear,
Gilded with hope, yet shaded too by fear.
The next his swarthy brethren of the mine
Learn'd by his alter'd speech the change divine !
Laugh'd when they should have wept, and swore, the day
Was nigh when he would swear as fast as they.
"No," said the penitent, "such words shall share
This breath no more ; devoted now to prayer.
O ! if Thou seest (thine eye the future sees !)
That I shall yet again blaspheme like these,
Now strike me to the ground on which I kneel,
Ere yet this heart relapses into steel ;
Now take me to that heav'n, I once defy'd,
Thy presence, thy embrace !" He spoke, and died !

COWPER.